

WILTON LANNING: CUSTODIAN OF
A TEXAS ICON

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this year, the state of Texas mourned the loss of Wilton Lanning, the founder of the Dr Pepper Museum and W.W. Clements Free Enterprise Institute in Waco.

Texas is a state rich with history, and certain people, places, and objects have become cultural icons. The Alamo, Sam Houston, Friday night lights, and country music, to name a few are all woven into the fabric of Texas.

The popular soda Dr Pepper is one such Texas icon. While the refreshing, sweet beverage has become a hit with consumers around the world, Texans retain a special connection to the brand. Nowhere is this bond stronger than in Waco, where the soda was originally created in a corner drug store in the late 1800's.

Although the company had moved on from its original location as its business continued to grow, Lanning sought to bring the iconic brand back to Waco. He set his sights on a disused building, an abandoned bottling facility, in downtown Waco to house a nonprofit museum dedicated to the heritage and history of the beloved soda.

The odds were stacked against him. The city of Waco had still not completely recovered from the brutal tornado that tore through the city in 1953, and the neighborhood Lanning had his eyes on was run down and bereft of economic or social vitality. The building itself had been declared "blighted" by the city of Waco, hardly the ideal spot for a shrine of a world-famous soda product.

There were more than a few naysayers, but Lanning did not let the doubters deter him. Instead, he took initiative to garner support from the Dr Pepper Company and convinced them to sell the building in 1988 with the purpose of converting it into a museum. The renovation began in 1990, and Lanning oversaw the conversion of the old, decrepit building into an exhibition dedicated to Dr Pepper.

The museum opened to the public on May 11, 1991, 38 years to the day after the devastating tornado swept through Waco. 10,000 visitors passed through on the first day, and they continued to come. The museum itself continued to expand from humble origins, and in 1997, the entire building was open to the public. In the same year, Lanning also helped launch the W.W. Clements Free Enterprise Institute, an organization housed in the museum dedicated to educating visitors on the American economic system as personified in the soft drinks industry. Today, the museum has become a pilgrimage site for Dr Pepper aficionados from Texas and beyond, an essential institution to promoting the history and culture of our great state.

None of this would have been possible without Mr. Lanning's leadership and vision. He will be missed not only for his role in the Dr Pepper Museum but also as an active, industrious citizen. He served his community with unrivaled passion and zeal as an Eagle Scout, a 50-year veteran of the Rotary Club, and an expert on Waco's history. Above all, however, the people of Waco and Texas will miss him

as a friend and one whose unceasing optimism inspired those around him to be positive.

Mr. Speaker, Wilton Lanning left an admirable example to imitate, and he embodied the best values of our citizenry. So next time you crack open a cold Dr Pepper, raise your glass to Mr. Lanning, a custodian of a Texas icon. And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC CAREER OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL on becoming the longest serving Republican Senate Leader with a historic tenure of 11 years, 5 months and 10 days. My dear friend and colleague from Kentucky is a masterful political strategist with a once in a generation political mind, and it gives me great pride and happiness to recognize him on the achievement of this remarkable milestone.

For decades, Leader MCCONNELL has dedicated himself to the public service of the Nation, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and the Republican Party. Guided by a deep-seeded conservatism, an unparalleled respect for our great Nation's Constitution and the institutions of our democracy, and the ever-relevant wisdom of our Founding Fathers, Leader MCCONNELL has demonstrated unmatched political acumen and dynamic leadership. His instincts are second to none: he knows when to fight and he knows when to compromise. The Leader is calculated and tactical, with keen foresight, and he works harder than anyone in the U.S. Capitol building. As a result, he simply gets things done.

While he has been at the helm of our great Party during times of celebration, prosperity and jubilation, the Senator has also never hesitated to step forward and lead the Party in times of turbulence and controversy. Through it all, he has seemed unflappable. Time after time, Senator MCCONNELL has taken on a leadership role and worked tirelessly for the Republican Party by serving as our Party's Senate Whip, Minority Leader, and Majority Leader. While holding each of these positions, Senator MCCONNELL has worked to unify and guide the Party in the right direction. In doing so, he has rightfully attained the confidence, respect, and admiration of his colleagues and garnered many great accomplishments in the process.

As Senate Minority Leader, Senator MCCONNELL held closely to his conservative values in spite of enormous pressure from an opposing Democratic Party in Congress and Presidential Administration. As the momentum in Congress began to turn, Senator MCCONNELL once again stepped up to the challenge when his colleagues elected him as Senate Majority Leader. While holding this leadership position, he has achieved many successes, including the confirmation of Justice Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court and passage of the Senate's Tax Reform bill—both of which required a champion who was not afraid to be a target of criticism. Both victories serve as a

testament to Leader MCCONNELL's vision as one of the finest master strategists in the history of the U.S. Senate.

Throughout Leader MCCONNELL's tenure, he has also brought great esteem to our state and always remembered to prioritize our old Kentucky home. He has also continued to proudly represent our region since he was first elected as Senator in 1984. It has been a joy of mine to work alongside him on various bills and projects that have positively impacted Kentuckians. Together, we have worked to create jobs, support veterans, protect the coal industry, and sustain agriculture within Kentucky. I look forward to continuing our collaboration to further the prosperity of the people and communities of our beloved Southern and Eastern Kentucky.

Once again, I would like to congratulate Leader MCCONNELL for this major milestone in his career of public service. It has been a pleasure to serve alongside him in Congress and to observe these historic moments of success. I wish him many more years of continued good health, happiness, and success.

FEDERAL INSURANCE OFFICE

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I will vote for the Federal Insurance Office Reform Act of 2017 because it prevents covered agreements from imposing new prudential requirements without a separate act of Congress. I am worried about the availability and accessibility of nationwide data about insurance and want assurances that this will be addressed before the bill reaches the House floor.

CONGRATULATING THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INDEPENDENCE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 12, 2018

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Republic of the Philippines on the 120th anniversary of its independence from Spain. On May 1, 1898, The Battle of Manila Bay signaled the United States' entry into the war with the Spanish that the Philippines had been fighting since 1896. On June 12, 1898, encouraged by support from our country, the Philippine people declared their independence after over 200 years of Spanish colonial rule. By August, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and my home, Guam, officially became a part of the United States.

Since earning their independence, the Philippine people have suffered through years of dictatorship, martial law, and Japanese occupation. The people of Guam are particularly sympathetic to these atrocities, having ourselves been occupied by enemy forces during World War II.

Since its independence, the Republic of the Philippines and the United States have shared a strong friendship and alliance that enhances